

# Congressman Elijah E. Cummings

November 22, 2002

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*A message from  
Congressman Elijah E. Cummings*



*It is both a privilege and honor to represent you in the United States Congress. While serving you, I will continue outreach efforts to further inform you of legislative action in Congress. I welcome your advice. Government "by the people" is the cornerstone of my legislative philosophy.*

*Elijah E. Cummings  
Member of Congress*

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## **Congressman Cummings Hosts Community Forum for Local Anti-Drug Activists**

On November 19, Congressman Cummings hosted a community forum at Johns Hopkins University to alert the public about a federal program that provides millions of dollars in federal grants to grassroots organizations who combat neighborhood crime and drug trafficking.

The meeting was called in response to the recent arson that tragically killed the seven members of the Dawson family in Baltimore, who were known for their anti-drug crusade. At the forum, Congressman Cummings urged neighborhood activists to continue their anti-drug efforts and carry on the legacy of the Dawson family.

"Illegal drug trafficking, drug addiction, and drug-related violence continue to threaten the health and safety of every person in our region," Congressman Cummings noted. "This forum is an important step in combating that drug plague by providing information on how to develop a stronger and more effective alliance in our community."

He then explained the federal Drug-Free Communities Support Program, available through the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP). The program is a national initiative to support the work of local, community-based coalitions in reducing drug use and strengthening collaborations in the community. The federal matching grant program provides technical and organizational assistance - as well as matching grants of up to \$100,000 - to qualifying community organizations

As the Ranking Member of the Government Reform Subcommittee on

Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources, Congressman Cummings was instrumental in adding language in the legislation that specifically allocated resources to economically-disadvantaged communities. The bipartisan legislation, *H.R. 2291: The Extension of the Authorization of the Drug-Free Communities Support Program*, was passed by both Houses and signed into law in December 2001.

The Nov. 19 forum included several panelists who have been active in the anti-drug movement across the nation. The panelists included special guest Mary Ann Solberg, the Deputy Director of ONDCP; Thomas Carr, the Director of the Washington-Baltimore High-Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Program (HIDTA); Beverly Watts- Davis, of San Antonio Texas; Richard McCain, of Cleveland, Ohio; and Doreen Turk-White of Detroit, Michigan.

Representatives from more than fifty volunteer groups, faith-based organizations, businesses, schools, as well as concerned citizens attended the meeting.

Congressman Cummings said, "Fighting drug trafficking in the community requires the strength and diversity of multiple coalitions."

He noted that because of a provision he helped remove before the final legislation was passed, multiple coalitions are able to apply the grants. The original version of H.R. 2291 contained a provision that would have restricted the grants to only one coalition per congressional district.

"If this limiting provision had become law, it would have worked to the disadvantage of large cities that often have numerous community anti-drug coalitions spread across a densely populated area," Congressman Cummings said.

*Continued on Pg. 2*

## ***Anti-Drug Community Coalitions, From Pg. 1***

At the conclusion of the forum, Congressman Cummings noted that this forum is just a first step in a more expanded, longer-term commitment to coalition-building.

To expand and facilitate coalition-building in the Baltimore-area, Congressman Cummings has developed the Baltimore Region Anti-Drug Working Group which will help facilitate the formation of anti-drug coalitions. The Working Group will help coalitions apply for the Drug Free Communities matching funds. The deadline for the next awards is April 2003 (exact date will be set in February).

In addition, Congressman Cummings will host an application technical assistance workshop in January 2003 to guide individuals through the grant application process.

### **Congressman Cummings Secures \$1.05 Million HIV/AIDS Grant**

As a longtime advocate for increased federal attention and funding for those affected by HIV/AIDS, Congressman Cummings secured a \$1,050,000 federal grant for the People's Community Health Center which serves the uninsured in Baltimore.

Available under the Ryan White CARE Act Programs, the "Early Intervention Services and Primary Medical Care" grant will help the People's Community Health Center provide HIV/AIDS patients with medical services such as risk-reduction counseling, antibody testing, and medical evaluation.

"In addition to caring for a patient's HIV/AIDS condition, the funds help the patient gain comprehensive health care including nutritional, psycho-social, and substance abuse services," Congressman Cummings said.

The Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency (CARE) Act was originally enacted by Congress in 1990 to address the unmet health needs of persons living with HIV disease. Congressman Cummings played a key role in the Act's reauthorization in 1996 and 2000. Today, it serves more than 500,000 individuals each year.

"HIV/AIDS disproportionately strikes minorities as well as those in poverty, who are often underserved by the healthcare system," Congressman Cummings noted. "In addition, those affected by HIV/AIDS need extra financial resources to pay for health insurance that is often lost due to the inability to work."

## **Baltimore Hospitals Receive Federal Funds for Bioterrorism Preparedness**

In response to a recent FBI warning that hospitals in several U.S. cities should be on alert for potential biological attacks, Congressman Cummings announced that more \$2.1 million in federal funds has been awarded to Maryland hospitals to prepare for bioterrorism. Fifty-three Maryland hospitals shared these funds to buy protective equipment, upgrade communications systems and train hospital staff.

Dr. Steve Holtzclaw, MD, Chair of Emergency Medicine at the Good Samaritan Hospital said, "With escalating costs for personnel and supplies, it is difficult to meet all of the challenges we face. We thank Congressman Cummings for helping us begin to address these very important readiness needs."

Good Samaritan received \$42,980.31 for bioterrorism preparedness. Other hospitals in the 7<sup>th</sup> Congressional District received the following, based upon hospital size:

- Bon Secours, \$32,315.47
- Johns Hopkins, \$138,137.73
- Kennedy Kreiger, \$27,794.20
- Mt. Washington Pediatrics, \$23,743.41
- Kernan, \$27,012.13
- Maryland General, \$37,211.98
- Mercy Medical Center, \$45,517.45
- St. Agnes, \$50,730.62
- Union Memorial, \$52,967.40
- University of Maryland, \$94,893.03

Congressman Cummings worked with other Members of the Maryland federal delegation to push for specific allocations to the state's hospitals.

The federal funds come from special provisions made in *H.R. 3338: FY 2002 Department of Defense Appropriations* that allocates more than \$2 billion for handling potential bioterrorism threats. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services disbursed the funds.

Congressman Cummings said, "Since bioterrorism can indiscriminately affect any person, we should make sure that every hospital in Maryland has the adequate resources needed to help patients who may be exposed to a biological attack."